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is a spiritual ceremony pure and simple; the guardian spirit is the point of reference from whatever aspect viewed. In contrast, the comparable ceremony of the Quinault or Klallam of the Coast exhibits a dual basis, both conceptually and historically. Spirit singing is combined and integrated with the idea of the potlatch; the two cannot be treated separately. Thus, among the Klallam,

> A potlatch which is accompanied either with spirit singing or with a performance of the secret society is called l!a"anuk. This can take place either during the quiet-period or in the summer when the secret society ritual is held. At any of these potlatches there could be another performance of guardian spirit songs, in fact this is looked upon as one of the principal sources of entertainment [!]. If a man's wife or his son dances and sings during an evening's entertainment he will make gifts to all the men of the upper class who are present . . . to create good feeling and to display an individual's wealth.[87]

Of the Quinault we are told:

> In native theory an ordinary potlatch was in a way suggested by a man's guardian spirit. If a man had the "wealth spirit" the spirit would tell him "You had better throw (away) our money now. I (*i.e.*, the spirit) would like to see the people enjoy themselves and hear all the shamans sing their songs."[88]

These examples serve to place in clear relief the essential differences between the Winter Spirit Dance of the Plateau and the Spirit Singing-Potlatch of the Coast. The duality of purpose in the latter area is obvious. Furthermore, all of the following features of the Coast may differ from the Plateau: season, sponsorship, leadership of singing and dancing, nature of singing and dancing, power contests (absent), shamanistic performances (absent), and participation.

The historic diversity of the complexes of the Plateau and the Coast may be shown best by the case of the Lower Chinook. Here at the mouth of the Columbia River, where coastal and interior influences converge, both patterns are represented in clearly distinct forms.

The major religious ceremony is the guardian spirit dance. The time of the yearly dance is determined, to the native mind, by the period of spirit visitations, September until spring. Each dance occupies five days only, but many are held in various parts of Lower Chinook territory during the dance season. Dancers travel from one to another, other activities permitting. The dances are individually sponsored by

[87] Gunther, *Klallam Ethnography*, p. 306.
[88] Olson, *Quinault Indians*, p. 124.

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persons with guardian spirit power. The uniform procedure (apart from initiation ritualism) consists of spirit singing and dancing by all of those possessing power. Shamanistic or power performances, though a part of the dance program, seem to be relatively unimportant.[69] In all details this pattern conforms to the outline for the Plateau.

Lower Chinook "potlatches," which are held only in summer or fall, differ in sponsorship, motivation, and program, but emphasize spirit singing and dancing. Despite the differences, the question may arise:

> Why segregate these practices from the guardian spirit performances, since the most specialized feature was spirit singing and dancing? The answer is two-fold: First, the Chinook themselves made a distinction. They seemed to feel that this was a basic and generalized pattern of social activity into which might be fitted any specialized or distinctly categorized procedure. This framework was not essential to the integrity of certain specific practices; as a result the aspects were separable, producing a false impression of analogy. Thus the guardian spirit dance was distinctly fitted into the framework, so well fitted, indeed, that it had become virtually inseparable. But to call one a function or analogue of the other would do violence to native theory.[70]

Objective differences, which constitute the second factor, run fairly parallel to those enumerated above in analysis of Klallam and Quinault practices.

The almost invariable association of gift-giving with the Spirit Dance demands further consideration.[71] Can this be interpreted as an attenuated form of the potlatch? (If so, a "dual purpose" emerges for Plateau as well as Coast, and statements above are contradicted.) I have argued against such an assumption, even from the point of view of the Lower Chinook.

> There exists a real question as to whether it is justifiable to segregate under a separate term those practices having to do with feasting and gift-giving, especially when that term is one as fraught with meaning as the word potlatch. . . . All of the signification of the typical potlatch was absent [in Lower Chinook ceremonialism]. Presents were distributed but return was in no sense obligatory, to say nothing of return with interest. If the supply of

[69] Ray, *Lower Chinook*, pp. 81–83

[70] *Idem*, p. 95; cf. Ray, *Historical Position*, pp. 368 ff.

[71] The Klamath may be the one exception: "One informant said that beside the speaker the dancers were paid for their assistance, but this was explicitly denied by others" (Spier, *Klamath Ethnography*, p. 115).

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gifts were limited the upperclassmen were favored, but if there were plenty all received share and share alike! . . . Wealth songs were wholly unknown. Leadership in singing and dancing was limited to those with spirit power; wealth or social status was no substitute. Ceremonial grouping was based on village affiliation, not wealth or lineage. Demonstration of superiority by the hosts and the shaming of guests was limited to such neutral demonstrations as grossness of appetite, and even here the hosts dared not go too far.[72]

Of the Quinault, Olson writes:

Quinault potlatches stand about midway in the scale between the simple wealth displays of the south and the exaggerated and complicated ceremonials of the northern tribes. . . . The fundamental elements are the desire to gain a moderate amount of social prestige—the element of rivalry scarcely enters. The giving of goods is almost as much a privilege or an obligation as the occasion of display of vanity. The feasting and games bulk large in the picture. It is a festival, a "good time" period, with the words of the guardian spirit best expressing its tone and the native conception of the institution: "Your had better throw (away) our money now. I would like to see the people enjoy themselves and to hear all the shamans sing their songs."[73]

Though Olson is impressed by the differences between Quinault potlatching and that of the British Columbia coast, the two are much more akin than Quinault and Lower Chinook practices. This fact must be emphasized because geographical relationships are apt to create a wrong impression here. Were I to have encountered practices among the Lower Chinook which even approached those of the Quinault, I would in consequence have argued as vigorously for specific northern connections as I now do for viewing the complex as the result of cultural overlay upon a temporally old and widespread pattern of feasting and gift-giving, linking the Coast and the Plateau.[74]

But let us turn to the Plateau and examine actual practices there. At the Spirit Dance of the Sanpoil,

Practically every person who sang his song and led a dance contributed presents for the distribution on the last day of the dance. When one went to the center pole a relative or helper carried the presents to the spokesman who placed them on a long pole provided for that purpose. Contributing presents was not compulsory, however. Tom [an informant] insisted that those who did not give were not looked down upon. "But it made one feel

[72] Ray, *Lower Chinook*, p. 93.
[73] Olson, *Quinault Indians*, p. 129.
[74] Cf. Ray, *Historical Position*.

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better to give something away." Shamans, as a rule, gave more than laymen, and the sponsor of the dance gave most of all. . . . All those who had danced received presents. Those who had danced "hardest and best" were given the best ones. There was no prejudice against strangers in the bestowal. In fact, they were the first to receive presents. If the bulk of goods was very great, small gifts were sometimes presented to those who had not danced.[75]

Regarding the Wishram, we are told that the singers

gave some little things away; a few eagle feathers or some other articles they wore. A singer was not compelled to make gifts, but if he did not, he was classed as cheap, mean-minded, and selfish, and when such a one was hired to cure he was paid less than those who freely gave away their belongings. The belief was that one who gave freely knew that he had a strong spirit, would become a strong shaman when he was ready to practice, would secure the best of pay because he was more certain of a cure. Such a shaman could soon reimburse himself for the cost of these gifts.[76]

In describing the Spirit Dance of the Southern Okanogan, Cline speaks of the gift-giving feature as a "potlatch." However, his data not only belie the name, but are especially pertinent to the present inquiry. The general procedure parallels that of the Sanpoil. Like them, the host gave away more articles than anyone else.

These were a *reward to the people for helping him to control his power*, they were likewise regarded as *gifts to his guardian spirit*. It was believed that the spirit would compensate its generous protégé by a run of luck in gambling or hunting in the following summer. David said that a shaman who received a blanket or other gift at the dance did not feel obliged to make a return gift, for this was like "pay" to him for his singing and dancing, and that the giver regarded the gifts as a simple loss of property for the sake of his power.[77]

The relation is obvious between this point of view and that of the Wishram, as expressed above, but a further parallel appears with Flathead practice. Among the latter the audience does not receive the gifts; they are presented "to the center pole." Turney-High writes that on the last day of the ceremony a

dance is performed before the tree and *prayers to the guardians* are offered. As the night advances each person who has a wish prays and hangs a gift on

[75] Ray, *Sanpoil and Nespelem*, pp. 196, 199. Through a serious typographical error in the original printing the word "not" was omitted in the phrase "were not looked down upon."

[76] Spier and Sapir, *Wishram Ethnography*, p. 242.

[77] Cline, *Southern Okanagon*, pp. 151 f. Italics mine.

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431 535 776 796 the tree. . . . When everyone has hung his gift on the tree, the shamans ask if everyone has completed his wish. If so, they give the signal to a chosen man who wraps the tree in a robe as tightly as possible. This done, two youths seize the tree and, rushing down the two lines of dancers, flee with it to the wilderness where they hide it. No one is supposed to find the tree. But if it should accidentally be found, the finder must not touch it or remove any of the offerings or terrific misfortune would overtake him.[78]

The articles presented to the spirits via the center pole are merely tokens, without material value, such as bits of skin, feathers, and the like. This practice carries over into the Plains (see below); the selection of articles may represent a link with the Wishram. But especially interesting is the practice of disposing of the pole, which is paralleled among a number of Plateau groups. The Southern Okanogan, for example, carry the pole to the woods, where it is placed upright against a tree and abandoned.[79]

431 796 We have thus followed gift-giving, as a feature of spirit ceremonies, from the one extreme of the typical potlatch to the other of purely spiritual tokens. One last observation may be added. A Lower Thompson informant explained gift-giving in this way, "The largest gifts are given to the people who have come the farthest from home. You see, it is more expensive for them to make the trip, so they ought to have more."

I cannot feel that these Plateau traits are mere vague reflections of the coastal potlatch. In form and function they differ as indicated. Furthermore, the elaborated potlatch of the northern Coast is probably a relatively recent development. But the gift-giving of the Plateau is deep-seated, locally varied, and undoubtedly old. I dare say that no area in America would fail to show some example of gift-giving as close to the potlatch in form as most of Plateau practices.

And yet I do not argue that the two are historically unrelated. Each seems to be an areal specialization upon a long existing custom of gift-giving; the unique coastal specialization being by far the more elaborate. Furthermore, a certain amount of secondary diffusion of superficial elements has ensued. The ceremonial approach of the Lower Chinook may be cited; also, the formal nature of the distribution among Plateau groups near the Coast.

To be sure, the term potlatch might be applied to this simple sub-

[78] Turney-High, *Flathead Indians*, pp. 40 f. Italics mine.
[79] Cline, *Southern Okanogan*, p. 147.

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stratum of gift-giving. But I do not think anyone wants to do this; it certainly would be confusing. The word would, in consequence, be applicable to cultures in any part of the world. Certainly Olson is not arguing for such a meaning when he contrasts the potlatch of the Quinault with that of the Kwakiutl:

> In the potlatches of the Kwakiutl and neighboring tribes the features of bitter rivalry, high rates of interest, destruction of goods, fictitious values, and the "fighting with wealth" stand out as pathological social patterns. . . . I mention these points for the reason that the potlatch of the Kwakiutl has long been regarded as typifying the whole potlatch system of the area. Actually it is an extreme type, an example of the lengths to which an institution may be carried. A potlatch like that of the Quinault is far more likely to turn out to be the proto-type. Its pattern remains fairly simple; no deeplaid plots, no egotistical mania surround its inception and execution.[80]

But it does involve formal invitations in order of social position, large accumulations of wealth, primary interest in quantity and distribution, a wealth tallyman, rehearsals, and wealth songs. But more important than all this, perhaps, is the fact that the gifts represented the *wealth of the host* and marked his social position; in distinct contrast to the Plateau where the gifts were *provided by the guests* as well as the host, and the amount furnished by the latter was no reflection of rank.

In a recent study Barnett has attempted to present sufficient evidence in its proper perspective to contribute to a better understanding of the potlatch:

> Above all, the present summary points to a more refined and definitive concept, and consequently to a more circumspect use of the term. It signifies not simply an exchange of gifts, for that custom is too widespread and diversely associated to be the criterion of the potlatch. Neither is the latter fundamentally competitive. It is characterized by certain formal requirements, by an implied equation of social worth with institutionalized liberality, and by its function as a vehicle for publicizing social status.[81]

We have been carried far afield from the discussion of the Spirit Dance as such, but may profitably remain afield for the moment. Lower Chinook ceremonies throw light upon the history of yet another aspect of spirit ceremonialism and of the potlatch: the secret society of the Coast.

[80] Olson, *Quinault Indians*, p. 129.
[81] Barnett, *Nature of the Potlatch*, p. 357.

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The Secret Society

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We have seen that among the Klallam the potlatch may be combined with either spirit singing or secret society rituals, and to either combination the same name is applied. Again, among the Quinault the secret society rituals are sometimes associated with the potlatch.[82] But the Lower Chinook society is cast in the mold of the spirit dance and well integrated with the spirit concept.

> Eligibility to membership depended upon two factors, upper class status and the possession of a "secret society guardian spirit." The latter phrasing merely implied spirit instruction to join the society plus the conveyance of the necessary type of power. Such power was obtained in exactly the same fashion as any other. It consisted of the ability to inflict self-torture, followed by miraculous recovery. . . . The externals of [the initiation of the novice] were identical with the guardian spirit initiation.[83]

These parallels, as well as the absence of the society-potlatch combination, are undoubtedly due to indirect influences from the Plateau. The nature of the Lower Chinook Spirit Dance and much of the guardian spirit complex points to the interior. The Plateau has thus indirectly affected the local form of a typically Northwest Coast institution entirely unknown to it. Even as far northward as the Quinault, the "society" is considered a special kind of spirit, obtainable in the same fashion as any other, but it is not stated that possession of this spirit is essential to membership.[84]

The Spirit Singing of Puget Sound

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On Puget Sound spirit singing is frequent during the winter season, but available data are insufficient to establish the exact nature of the ceremony, or the structural relationship with the Spirit Dance of the Plateau. The actual spirit singing and dancing follow the Plateau pattern, but whether such activities are ever entirely divorced from the potlatch is uncertain. The latter is fairly well developed in typical form. According to Haeberlin

> The potlatch was a great feast given primarily for the distribution of gifts to the guests. Each person receiving gifts at such an occasion was under obligation to his host to invite him to his next potlatch and to give him an adequate gift in return. . . . If a man received one blanket, at his own potlatch he re-

[82] Olson, *Quinault Indians*, p. 121.
[83] Ray, *Lower Chinook*, pp. 89 f.
[84] Olson, *Quinault Indians*, pp. 120 f.

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turned two or three. . . . The sgwē'gwē' ["cultus potlatch" in Chinook jargon: "bad potlatch"] was held in summer when the salmon began to run. It could only be given by a man having the [wealth] spirit and was given in a potlatch house. . . . At this affair everyone tried to show the "power" he had. One man swallowed hot bullets and made them come out at his side.[85]

This indicates intimate relationship between the potlatch and spirit ceremonialism. However, the winter season was set apart for ceremonies specifically revolving around spirit singing.

Any time from the middle of November to the beginning of January a man's guardian spirit came back to him and urged him to sing his spirit songs and perform his dance. . . . Then he would call his friends together and they helped him sing and dance. . . . These dances varied greatly in length, for a man sang as long as his spirit commanded him to do so, often several days. At this dance no shaman was present.[86]

The absence of shamans clearly sets this apart from the Plateau dance, as well as the variable duration and the limitation of sponsorship to those experiencing the return of a spirit. Lummi practices seem to lie intermediate between those of lower Puget Sound and those of the Klallam. But the data are so non-definitive as to prohibit any specific interpretations.[87]

Intra-areal Relations

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Though the Winter Guardian Spirit Dance emerges as a highly typical Plateau complex, it is not found throughout the area. Indeed, as implied above, it is quite as definitely absent in the northern part of the region as in the Plains or on the Coast. It is shared uniformly by all central and southern Plateau groups, namely, the Klamath, Wishram,[88] Tenino, Umatilla, Cayuse, Nez Percé,[89] Yakima, Klikitat, Kittitas, Wenatchi, Columbia, Southern Okanogan, Sanpoil, Colville, Spokane, Lakes, Coeur d'Alêne, Flathead, Kalispel, and Okanogan. This is the familiar affiliation when a north-south contrast is found. The participation of the Klamath in this distribution is of marked significance since the Spirit Dance is quite unknown to the Basin and California. The sub-area of greatest integration and specialization appears to be the middle Columbia (Southern Okanogan, Sanpoil). This

[85] Haeberlin and Gunther, *Indians of Puget Sound*, pp. 59 f.
[86] *Idem*, p. 61.
[87] Stern, *Lummi Indians*, pp. 54 ff.
[88] Spier and Sapir, *Wishram Ethnography*, pp. 240–44.
[89] Spinden, *Nez Percé Indians*, pp. 262–64.

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sing for us that we may dance." During the erratic dancing to the irregular singing of the Bluejays, a predetermined dancer grasps the "destitute" character around the waist, a struggle ensues, and finally the Bluejay "dies." He is held head downward, feet in air, by his captor, while the dancers gather round. A smudge is prepared of sweet grass, sometimes mixed with a particular root, and the character is held over it. This brings him to life in normal condition. The black paint is washed off and he once more takes his place among the dancers. He becomes the center of attention as he tells of his "wanderings" while a Bluejay. Thereafter he dances as a normal individual. Some of the characters are allowed to remain untransformed until the following evening. The dance is concluded as on the fourth night.

The evening of the sixth day opens as usual with spirit singing and dancing. Later the ill come for treatment by the remaining Bluejay characters, or by ordinary shamans. These curing procedures are highly ritualized and brief. The power of the Bluejay to cure is restricted, since it is but an attribute of the supernatural form possessed at the moment, together with the power inherent in the center pole. It does not carry over in any way to the individual in normal state. The bulk of the curing associated with the Spirit Dance occurs during the daytime on the seventh day. At this time the services of regular shamans are available.

The dancing and singing of the seventh evening follow the pattern of the fifth night except that wishes for future good fortune are expressed upon the completion of each dance. At a signal by the leader, a shake of his rattle, all present give simultaneous verbal expression to their individual wishes. Sometimes the leader calls for the expression of a particular wish in unison, for example, "Throughout the following year may we have no illness that will cause us to lose blood."

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Toward the end of the evening the leader calls for presents to the center pole. Each person takes some small token to the pole and expresses a wish as he deposits it. Along with these gifts are placed the clothing torn from the Bluejay characters at the time of transformation. Now a dance ensues during which the leader shakes his rattle first toward one person and then another. The dancer indicated approaches the tree, gives it a slight tug, and expresses a wish. With the conclusion of the dance the leader pulls the pole from the ground and places it in the care of two or three dancers.

On the following morning the crowd assembles; the pole, together

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with the presents, is removed from the dance lodge and carried into the woods by those to whom its care was entrusted. The latter return shortly to the dance lodge and a period of indiscriminate dancing occurs while the lodge is dismantled, thus ending the ceremony.[104]

THE RELATION OF THE SUN DANCE TO THE SPIRIT DANCE

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In recent years it has become increasingly apparent that the Guardian Spirit Dance is not wholly unrelated to the Sun Dance. But the conviction has been born of reminiscent details and general impressions; substantial and sufficient data for the demonstration of the relationship have been lacking. It has long been known, however, that one Plateau tribe, the Kutenai, shares the Sun Dance with its Plains neighbors, the Blackfoot and the Sarsi. But beyond the bare fact of possession, we have remained quite ignorant. Until very recently we have suffered an equal lack of knowledge of the Flathead, who adjoin the Kutenai on the south and are the easternmost of the Plateau tribes. It has been generally assumed, however, that the Flathead did not participate in the Sun Dance. The Nez Percé, who lie south of the Flathead and are the southernmost of the Plateau tribes bordering the Plains, definitely lack the Sun Dance.

Obviously, then, the Kutenai and the Flathead are the groups indicated for study if the ceremonial relationship suggested for the larger areas is to be critically examined.

But before presenting specific data it may be well to review certain general features of the Plateau Spirit Dance which have a bearing on the problem. Superficially, the Guardian Spirit Dance exhibits very few similarities to the Sun Dance. The dance is invariably held in the winter, and actual dancing occurs only at night. The dances usually extend over a period of two months, though they are divided into units of four or five days. Sponsorship is typically the prerogative of shamans, though laymen may act as nominal sponsors at the time of initiation. All persons with spirit power participate; others act as spectators. All dances, songs, and individualistic regalia are symbolic of the various spirits of the dancers. As far as motivation may be generalized, it is concerned with the creation of a more intimate bond between a man and his tute-

[104] The relationship of this complex and its elements to the comparable ceremonies of other Plateau groups is discussed in Ray, *Bluejay Character;* the relation with the Sun Dance is considered in the following section of this paper.